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ENQUIRY

INTO THE ⁹²⁹⁷

NATURE AND QUALITIES
OF
ENGLISH WOOLS,

AND THE
VARIATIONS OF BREED IN SHEEP;

WITH

Some short Remarks on the Dean of Gloucester's
Ramphlet on Coarse Wools; and Proposals
for relieving the Wool-growers, by a Mode
which will not prejudice the Manufacturers.

BY

A GENTLEMAN FARMER.

L O N D O N :

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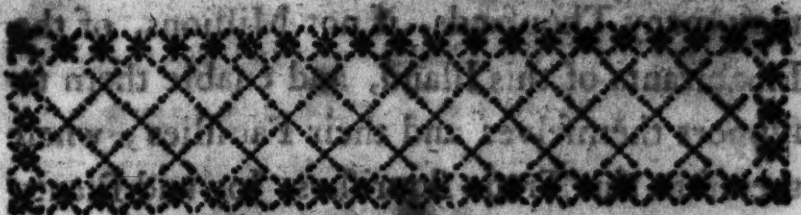
M.DCC.LXXXII.

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ENQUIRY, &c.

Of all the various Breeds of Sheep produced in this Kingdom, there are only two in which we are noted by Foreigners, on Account of the Wool they produce. One Sort is the

WOOL, which is one of the most valuable European Products, is nowhere cultivated with the Success that it is in this Island; and the Advantages which we derive from it, when made up and manufactured into different Kinds of *Cloths, Stuffs, &c.* yield not in Consequence to any other that is enjoyed by this great commercial Nation; neither can any other Trade so generally diffuse the Riches and Blessings which are derived from this; for the poor and lower Classes of all Denominations are the People who principally profit by it. The combing, spinning, weaving,

weaving, knitting, &c. of this Article, employ many Thousands, if not Millions, of the Inhabitants of this Island, and enable them to support themselves and their Families; when therefore this Trade flourishes, Joy and Plenty brighten the Faces of our poor Labourers and Artificers; but when it stagnates, Despondency and Depopulation are the inevitable Consequences.

OF all the various Breeds of Sheep produced in this Kingdom, there are only two in which we are envied by Foreigners, on Account of the Wool they produce. One Sort is the Sheep of *Suffolk, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Devonshire,* and particularly *Hampshire*, which are all more or less remarkable for the Fineness of their Fleeces. The other Kind is the Sheep of *Warwickshire* and *Lincolnshire*, which are not at all peculiar in the Fineness of their Wool, but in the Quantity they yield of it. This Wool is remarkably long in its Staple or Fibres, and the Pelt very thickly covered, so that a Fleece of it weighs more than any other whatsoever, and amply recompenses in Quantity what it wants in Quality. As these two Kinds are the most useful of any

any in our Manufactures, I shall, in the Sequel of this Enquiry, particularly consider from what natural Cause or Causes their Variations arise.—As to the other Kinds of Wools produced here, they are of a heterogeneous Nature, varying from each other, but possessing no peculiar Qualities which can recommend them to any very distinguishing Preference, and differing very little, if at all, from the Wool produced on the Continent.

It is well known that our Woollen Manufactures are more esteemed abroad, than those of any other Nation. This Superiority has been attributed to the Nature and Quality of our Wool alone, which some People say is all of it much better, and of a very different Nature from any produced on the Continent. In some Instances, the Distinction certainly arises from our Wool, that is to say, in those where the fine Wools are used which I have just mentioned; but in others, where the common coarse Wools of this Kingdom, or even the *Lincolnshire* Wool (which I have observed differs only in the Quantity of its Produce from those common Wools) are used, it certainly does not. There is a Circumstance

to which very little is attributed, and that is, the superior Excellence of our Workmanship. To this I am induced to think we are not a little indebted for the Reputation we have acquired even in our finer Articles; and I entirely attribute to it the Preference shewn our various Kinds of coarse Stuffs, &c. the Exportation of which is the most considerable Part of our Woollen Trade.—It is certain that not any Nation equals us in our Method of dressing and finishing all Kinds of Woollen Goods;—to prove this, I give the following instances:—

Our superfine Cloth is preferred in *Russia*, *Turkey*, and some other Countries, to that of *France*, altho' they are both made with Spanish Wool. The *Camblets* which are made at *Brussels*, and those the French use for Summer-Cloathing, are intrinsically good in Quality; but they have not so nice a Finishing as those of *British* Make. In *Saxony* there is a Manufacture of coarse Woollens, so similar, in every Respect but in the Finishing, to those made in *Norwich*, *Yorkshire*, *Leicestershire*, &c. that I have known a *Norwich* Merchant, when he was shewn some of these Goods in *Germany*

as *Norwich Stuffs*, declare, " that they were
 " very good Callimancoes, &c. but that the
 " Manufacturer had sent them off *half-drest*."
 —From these Circumstances I am led to form
 the following Conclusion: That though the
 Excellence of our fine Articles of Woollen
 Manufacture may arise jointly from our fine
 Wools and our good Workmen, yet the Ex-
 cellence of our coarse ones arises solely from
 our Artificers.

As this is a Point which will not be easily
 acceded to, by some Manufacturers, who wish
 to persuade us into a Belief, that all our Wool
 is specifically better, and different from the
 Wool of the Continent, and that therefore we
 cannot be too careful in preventing any of it
 getting into the Hands of our Rivals in the
 Woollen Branch, I shall not rest the Propriety
 of my Conclusion on the above Circumstances
 alone; I will also refer myself to the Mer-
 chants and Manufacturers at *Norwich*, in
Yorkshire, *Leicestershire*, *Northamptonshire*, &c.
 who consume the Wools of the Growth of
Lincolnshire in the making of single and double
 Warp Callimancoes, Camblets, Tammies,
 Damasks, and other Articles, Whether, in all
 those

Is it not a Fact, that, notwithstanding all the Difference in the Breed of Sheep on this Island, and the great Difference there is in Consequence in their Wool, that none is produced so bad, wirey, coarse, or short, but that it may be used up in making one or other Sort of Goods? What Reason then have we to suppose that our coarse Wools are of a peculiar Nature from those of any other Country? I have not the least Doubt, that in the maritime Provinces of *France*, the dry Parts of *Flanders*, and particularly in *Germany*, there is Wool produced, which might be used as successfully as our own, in the chief Part of our Woollen Manufactures; indeed, the Circumstances I have stated, regarding the Manufactures in *France* and *Saxony*, confirm me in it: And if this is the Case, as our coarse Wools are such a Drug at present, what great Prejudice could it prove to those manufacturing Gentlemen who oppose the Petition from *Lincolnshire*, if the Overplus of what their Fabricks cannot consume; was to be exported to other Countries, which

Mr. *Buffon* says, in *France*, the maritime Provinces, *Burgundy*, and the Country near the *Pyrenees*, produce the best Wool.

might again perhaps relieve them, when Wool should prove intolerably dear in *England*; in the same Manner as our Corn Trade is at present regulated. I must confess, as fair Traders they can have no Objection; yet there is a Consideration which induces me not to propose this Plan. My Dislike to it arises entirely from the Employment of which our numberless Artificers would be deprived, if raw Wool was allowed to be exported unmanufactured; and therefore I do not think that any Thing can justify the Adoption of such a Measure by our Legislature, but the certain Conviction that no Means are left, by which its Exportation in a manufactured State can be encouraged and augmented: In that Case indeed, it would be highly ridiculous to waste, in so wilful a Manner, that or any other Produce of the Kingdom, by preventing our Subjects from selling it at a foreign Market, when it cannot be used at Home. If therefore no Encouragement can be given to our Exports of Woollen Goods, a temporary Exportation of Wool is adviseable; but if (as I hope) such Encouragement may be given, it will then be neither adviseable or necessary:

But

But of this I shall speak further in its proper Place.

In pursuing our Subject concerning the Nature and Qualities of English Wools, it is necessary to observe, that the Excellence of our fine Wools is conspicuous in the Manufactures of superfine *Shalloons*, fine *Cloths* and *Hosiery*, as likewise of *Says*, some Kinds of *Silk* and *Worsted Goods*, and of the fine *Flannels* and *Duroys* of the West of England.—To shew that a great deal depends upon the Wool in the making of these Articles, and that the Wool used in them is peculiar almost to ourselves, it is only necessary to observe, that we have ever been unrivalled in these Goods, whereas in the others we have been and are still rivalled.

Therefore the only Breeds of Sheep by which this Country receives any peculiar Benefit, are those producing the fine Wool above-mentioned, and the *Lincolnshire* Breed, remarkable for their great Produce.—I shall endeavour to account for the Cause or Causes of the Excellence of these Breeds, and in so

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doing, I shall not scruple to ascribe it to
our Climate and insular Situation.

That these Breeds cannot be supposed different Species from the other Sheep in the Kingdom, is very certain; neither can they be reckoned different from the Sheep on the adjoining Parts of the Continent. — In the earliest Accounts of this Island, we do not find any Mention made of either Sheep or Wool. The Phœnicians, who traded to the Coast of *Cornwall*, procured various Articles from thence, of all which we have a particular Account, but neither Sheep or Wool are to be found amongst them. When the Romans visited the Island, they found “the Inhabitants of the inland Parts either entirely
“ naked or covered with Skins; those who
“ lived on the Sea Coasts, and were the most
“ civilized, affected the Manners of the Gauls,
“ and wore, like them, a Sort of Garment
“ called *Brachæ*.”

Whether there were actually any Sheep or not in *Great-Britain* at that Period, is very

hard to say. If we suppose with Mr. Buffon, that the Moufflon, or Musmon, is the Sheep in a wild State, we will be tempted to believe there were not any, because we know the Britons did not cultivate any Flocks of Sheep; and we have no Account of any Creature resembling the Moufflon being ever found in its State of Nature on this Island, although we know of several Animals which were then the Inhabitants of our Forests, but since entirely extirpated, particularly the wild Bull and the wild Boar. — The Circumstance of some of the Britons being covered with Skins, is no Argument to prove that there were not then Sheep to be found here, because we must naturally suppose that a rude People would sooner think of converting a Sheep-skin, with the Fleece on it, into a Garment, than of cutting off the Wool, and then spinning and weaving it; but, when we are told that some of them were already acquainted with the Gaulish Brachia, we must conclude, that, if there had been Sheep on the Island, they would have civilized and cultivated the Breed.

Mr. Hale says, that the first Instance we have of Sheep in the History of this Country,

is between the Years 712 and 727, when King *Ina* made a Law about their Price; that 160 Years afterwards, *Alfred* established the first *Woollen Manufacture*, which was so zealously supported by his Son and Successor, *Edward*, that he had his own Daughters instructed in *Spinning and Carding*. Notwithstanding this Royal Support, we find that the Breed of Sheep did not much increase, on account of the Wolves then on the Island, which were so numerous, that in the Time of *Atbelstan*, who succeeded his Father *Edward*, a *Retreat* was built at *Flixton* in *Yorkshire*, to prevent *Passengers* being devoured by them.*— If therefore such Difficulties arose in encreasing the Breed, when Sheep were protected by Man, we may well suppose that no Animal of this Kind but the *Moufflon* could have subsisted in an uncivilized and unprotected State in this Island; and therefore we must be either immediately indebted to that *reputed Common-Parent* for our Breed, or to our nearest continental Neighbours. What Reason then can

* Brit. Zool. p. 62.—If the Reader wishes to know further concerning the Rise and Progress of our Manufactures, I refer him to *Hale's Husbandry*, Article *Wool*; and *British Zoology*, Article *Sheep*.

there

there be to suppose, that either our *Herefordshire*, *Lincolnshire*, or any other Breed, are of a *peculiar Species*?

Sheep, we know, are affected by the Difference of their Food to so great a Degree, that the Vegetables they eat often give a particular Taste to their Flesh. In this Respect they resemble some other Animals, as well as Vegetables, but most particularly the Vine, which always assimilates the Flavor of its Fruit to the different Qualities and Nature of the Soil it grows on. As the Flesh, so likewise is the Wool of the Sheep affected by its Pasture. If a Breed of heavy-fleeced Sheep from *Lincolnshire* were carried to the Welch Mountains, they would soon dwindle away in Size, as well as Wool, till at last not any notable Distinction would remain between them and the native Mountaineers which are always found there; in the same Manner as the Burgundian Grape, transplanted to the Banks of the *Douro*, in Process of Time has been known to produce a genuine Wine, so similar to that of Port as not to be distinguished in Taste from it.

As the Difference of the Breed and Wool in Sheep is occasioned by the Difference of Food, we are to look to our Pastures for the Excellence or the Plenty of our Wool.

It is well known, that by Means of our insular Situation, we not only feel less the Effects of Cold than the Inhabitants of the Continent, but that also the Transition from Winter to Summer, and from Summer to Winter again, is not so rapid with us as it is with them, so that our Springs and Autumns are longer than theirs, and our Grass then grows exceedingly. It is observed, that Trees are in leaf here before they are in the North, and even Mid-Parts of *France*, which proceeds from the Warmth of the Ocean that surrounds our Island. The Exhalations from our Seas supply us with a great many refreshing Showers, which are precipitated almost as soon as they arise; our Heats likewise, from our insular Situation, are more moderate in Summer than those of other Places in the same Latitude.—From these Causes it arises that we have finer Pasturage on this Island than is to be found in general upon the neighbouring Part of the Continent, the Grass

on our best cultivated Lands being ranker and more luxuriant than their's, and many of our Commons covered with a short self-sown Grass, sweeter and more nutritive than any found either on their waste or cultivated Lands.

If we enquire into the natural State of those Counties where the fine Wools are grown, we shall find that there are great Numbers either of Downs, Commons, or common Pastures, covered with this Kind of Natural-Grass, which is of so delicate and fine a Nature, that it communicates its Excellence both to the Flesh and Wool of the Sheep; for here we find the Mutton, though small, always remarkably well flavored, and the Wool short but fine in the Grain.—There is no Feeding on any Part of the Continent equal with this, except in *Spain*. In *France* there are no Commons to be found, and in *Germany* the unclosed Land is so bad that it will bear nothing.—On the contrary, if we examine into the Nature of the Soil where the heavy coarse Fleeces are produced, we shall find the Pastures there covered with a rank high Grass, as in *Lincolnshire*, &c. Here the Sheep are larger than in other Places, the Mutton coarser, and

the Wool, like the rest of the Animal, acquires a Luxuriance of Growth, which is the Occasion of its Coarseness. This Kind of Feeding, we know, is not so unc customary as the former upon the Continent, many Parts of which are of a natural rich Soil; and therefore we do not possess that great Superiority over our Rivals in coarse Wools, which we do in fine ones.

Wherever Sheep are scantily fed; their Wool as well as their Mutton becomes poor, and wherever the Climate is very hot or very cold, the Wool degenerates into Hair. Neither *Wales* or *Scotland* produce such Plenty of Wool as *Ireland* or *England*, and it is owing to one or other of these Causes. There are, notwithstanding, some fine Wools produced in both Countries, but not in any great Quantities, there being considerable Room for Improvement in the Breed of each.

It seems so reasonable to ascribe the Variations of Breed in Sheep to the Difference in Pasture and Climate, that one would think all Writers on Agriculture would have agreed upon it. The best Writers on the Subject
have

have certainly been sensible of the Fact. Mr. *Mortimer* mentions the particular Breeds produced on different Soils;* and Mr. *Hale* says, "Two Things contribute to the Fineness of Wool—the Sweetness of Pasture, and the Cleanliness of Keeping. *The Kind* is not of so much Importance as *the Nourishment*, and *the same Sheep*, in a rich Pasture, will yield the *finest Wool*, that will afford but indifferent on a coarser Grass." An Opinion so reasonable, and so well grounded on Observation, one would not expect to find contradicted; yet Mr. *Mills* doubts, Whether or not Sheep that have been bred on Downs would suffer *any Alteration* when removed to a rich plentiful Pasture.

It should not be forgot, that our Downs and grassy Commons, which are the Nursery for our Breed of fine-wooled Sheep, afford not only a sweeter Feed, but are more dry and clean than inclosed Pastures, which contribute to the Fineness of the Fleece: Here too, an Animal must use more Exercise in Quest of Food, which is also thought to affect both Mutton and Wool.

* *Mortim. Husbandry*, p 241.

The Climate, I am induted to think, principally affects Sheep in the Effect it has upon their Food; for, notwithstanding we know that in hot Climates Sheep turn naturally hairy, yet in *Spain*, from whence we have such very fine Wool, they certainly do not.—We are told, that the Sheep which produce this fine Wool are driven from Home, round Half the Kingdom, in Quest of fresh Pasturage, and that the Wool is much coarser and inferior from those Sheep which are left at Home. It was supposed that both the Excellence of the Wool and the Mutton, in those perambulating Sheep, arose from their feeding on the Thyme, Lavender, Rosemary, and other aromatic Herbs, with which their Forests and Wastes in *Spain* are covered; but it is much more reasonable to attribute it to the short sweet Grass found at their Roots, under the Shade of their Leaves, in the deep Valleys, and on the Tops of those lofty Hills with which that Country abounds.*

* Mr. Barretti, in his Journey through *Spain*, says, the Spanish Shepherds assured him their Sheep would never eat of those aromatic Herbs, unless compelled by Hunger.

I have endeavoured to point out the Nature and Qualities of English Wools, and the Variations which are material in them, and I hope I have in some Measure succeeded.— There is little Danger of Rivalship in the fine Sorts, from the Nature of the Cultivation upon the Continent; but in the coarse Kinds, I have shewn our only Superiority is in the Quantity produced. It is certainly possible for other Nations, seated in a moderate Climate, to improve their Pasturage, and likewise to procure Artificers from us; it is therefore proper that our Manufacturers should have no Reason to be discontented with their Situation, nor our Farmers be obliged to plow up their Pastures, and kill or neglect their best Breeds of Sheep: Yet both these Evils are at present very likely to happen, if something be not speedily done to prevent it.

The inclosing of Commons has generally been esteemed detrimental to our Breed of Sheep. Dr. *Tucker* observes, that the Quantity of coarse Wools produced in this Kingdom has been greatly increased by the sowing of Turnips and artificial Grasses, and by the inclosing of our Commons, which were before
generally

generally covered with Heath, Furze, or Brush-wood, where the Sheep, he says, could hardly get a Bite, except in the Summer Months, and which now grow Turnips, Clover, &c. There is no Doubt that inclosing Commons of this Kind has been of Service to the Kingdom, and increased not only our Produce of Wool, but of Corn also; nevertheless, the Legislature ought to be very careful how they allow Inclosing without Discrimination. There are many Commons, I have already observed, in all those Counties particularly famous for fine Wool, which have neither Heath, Furze, Brush-wood, or any such unprofitable Kind of Plants, growing upon them, but a sweet Grass: To plow up and inclose this Kind, is totally to eradicate that Breed of fine Wools, which brings this Country such great Advantages, and which the French have so sedulously endeavoured to acquire, by importing some of our Sheep, under an Idea, perhaps, that they were of a peculiar Species, and would invariably produce the same Wool on their Pastures. This Conduct is the more impolitic, as there is Reason to believe, that, in some future Period, we shall be entirely deprived of the Use of
Spanish

Spanish Wool.*—As Commons of the above Kind are most inviting to the Incloser, affording him a Prospect of a speedy Return for his Money, I fear they have been much oftener inclosed than those Dr. *Tucker* describes, covered with Heath, &c.

Neither the Advocates for inclosing, or their Opponents, make any Discrimination in the Nature of Commons, when they argue upon the Subject; and whilst that is the Case, it is possible that, in a Variety of Instances, either Side may prove alternately right and wrong. Distinctions however ought certainly to be made, and Parliament should be well informed of the Nature of a Common, before they pass an Act for its Inclosure.

No Operation or Change in Husbandry has of late Years so much encreased the Produce of Wool in this Kingdom, as the Practice of enlarging Farms; a Practice which, though generally and deservedly reprobated, must be allowed to have produced some Good in this

* The King of *Spain* is said to be establishing and encouraging Woollen Manufactures, and to have already stopt the Exportation of Part of the Wool.

Respect.

Respect.—Sheep-grazing is the most Gentle^d manly Kind of Farming; its Profits are neat, little Trouble attends it, and the Farmer is not so subject to Imposition in this, as in most other Kinds of Cultivation: Our large Farmers therefore incline to it, as much as the Nature of their Soils will allow them, and by such Means have undoubtedly contributed not only to encrease the Produce of our Wool, but to improve the Breed of our Sheep.—In *Kent, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire*, and some other Counties, where the Soil is light, chalky, or sandy, penning of Sheep has been found an easy and cheap Improvement; and Gentlemen in those Counties may be the less blamed for increasing the Extent of their Farms, because little Farmers in general cannot afford to purchase a Flock of Sheep sufficient to pen upon the Land: But if some Gentlemen of ample Fortune, and public Spirit, had set the Example of allowing these poor Farmers a Year, or even two Years Rent, always in Arrear, on Condition that the Money was laid out in keeping a Flock of Sheep, they would have rendered not only a most essential Service to their Country, but to themselves.

The

The Dean of *Gloucester* supposes that the present low Price of coarse Wools entirely arises from our Disuse of the Wear of coarse Woollen Manufactures at Home, and from our War with *America*; the first he supposes to be the principal, the latter only the secondary Cause of the Evil. — I am sorry to be under the Necessity of widely differing from so respectable an Authority. Our Disuse of coarse Woollen Goods cannot be denied: It is obvious to every Person who pays the smallest Attention to Things, that even Women Servants wear fewer Stuff Gowns than formerly, and Men hardly any Woollen Waistcoats and Breeches; all which, with the American War, must be supposed to have made no small Diminution in our Home Consumption. But the Doctor mistakes greatly, in supposing our Home Consumption of coarse Woollens is, or ever was, “much greater than any Exportation which can be supposed to a foreign Market.” On the contrary, had he enquired at those manufacturing Places where the coarse Wools are used, which are grown in different Parts of the Kingdom, but particularly in *Lincolnshire*, from whence the Complaints arise, he would have been informed

that Three-fourths, if not Four-fifths of them, are used up in the Manufacture of Stuffs totally designed for a foreign Market, the very Names of which I believe are known to few People of the Island but the Manufacturers themselves; and their Appearance is so singularly gaudy and extravagant, that I dare say they were never yet seen on the Back of an Englishman.

The Evil which the Doctor complains of has been encreasing for some Time: It is not within this Ten or Twenty Years that all this Change of Garment at Home has taken Place, and yet it is no longer ago than the Years 1776 and 1777 that Wool bore a very high Price, not only in *Lincolnshire*, but in every other Part of the Kingdom, and our Woollen Manufactures never flourished more in any Period, than they did between the Years 1770 and 1778; which will likewise prove, that they were not materially affected by the American War.—Some particular Branches of Manufactures, which were principally consumed at Home, and in *America*, may have been greatly affected; but these were only partial Misfortunes, and no Conclusion should
be

be drawn from them, respecting so large a Concern as the Woollen Trade of this Kingdom in general. — The Decrease in our internal and American Consumption, has never materially affected this Country; it has been quite absorbed in the Immensity of our foreign Trade, to *Spain, Italy, Turkey, Holland, Germany, and Russia*, which was so great of late Years, that the Demand for raw Wool has actually increased since the Commencement of the American War, and long since the Disuse of coarse Woollen Cloathing became very general in *England*.

The Stagnation in our Woollen Trade may be dated from the Commencement of our War with *Spain*. The Dean of *Gloucester*, I dare say, is not ignorant that not only most of the religious, but also many of the other Inhabitants of that Country, as well as of their Settlements on the vast Continent of *South America*, are clothed with British Manufactures; the Loss of the Spanish Trade was therefore a deadly Blow to us, and yet it is not the Deprivation of their Trade alone which completes the whole Misfortune of the Spanish War; for by their blocking up *Gibraltar*, and

possessing the Command of the *Streights*, they prevent our Woollens going to *Italy* and *Turkey*, which are heavy Goods, and cannot be transported by Land, in the Manner we now receive the raw Silks from *Piedmont*. The only Alternative our Manufacturers have, is to ship their Goods for *Italy* and *Turkey* in neutral Vessels, or send them by Way of *Ostend*; but these Conveyances are intolerably expensive, and afford only a small Relief, not a Cure, for the Complaint.

The War which has since taken place with the Dutch, has completed the Stagnation of our Manufactures. These People wore great Quantities of both our slight and heavy Woollens, which were in great Vogue amongst them; it is natural therefore to imagine that their Trade must have been large, especially when one reflects that *Holland*, for its Extent, is the most populous Country in *Europe*. — When it is considered that there only remain *Germany* and *Russia*, of all those Places to which we had an open Trade for our Manufactures, it will not appear surprizing that our Wool-growers can find no Demand for their raw Materials.

Though

Though a Peace with *Spain* and *Holland* would in all Probability relieve the Distress of our Wool-growers, yet, as it is quite uncertain when that may take Place, some Relief ought to be sought after immediately, not so much it should seem to indemnify them for the Losses they may have sustained (which are certainly very heavy) as to prevent their adopting other Modes of Husbandry that would prove fatal to our Breed of *Lincolnshire* Sheep, and the annual Supply of Wool which it is always necessary to have for the Use of our Manufactures, and which, if once diminished or destroyed, would be a long Time in re-establishing.—And herein I do really think that the Manufacturers themselves are much more interested than the Wool-growers, altho' they have opposed the latter receiving any Relief from Government; for the Farmer can certainly adopt other Modes of Culture, and do very well without the Manufacturer, but I defy the Manufacturer to make and export his Woollens, unless the Farmer supplies him with the Materials. If, indeed, those Farmers throughout the Whole of this Kingdom, who grow Wool, could not redress themselves, though Parliament should not; if no other

Animal

Animal but Sheep could be grazed on their Pastures, or their Lands plowed up and sown; then indeed our Manufacturers might well suppose they could always procure Wool at whatever Price they chose to give, and fear no bad Effects from the most ample Indulgence of that monopolizing Spirit, which seems to have dictated their Opposition to the Petition from *Lincolnshire*.

It is somewhat extraordinary, that, amongst so great a Number of Gentlemen who opposed that Petition, though many of them must be supposed Men of good Understanding, it should never have occurred to any of them, that the very Means which they take to keep the Price of Wools so unreasonably low, will in the End defeat their own Design.—As these Gentlemen may be very little acquainted with Agriculture, I shall explain how that Event is likely to arise, from the Measures they have adopted; and as I know that Precedent has more Effect than Argument, I shall revert back to the short History of the Corn Trade, for an Example peculiarly to my Purpose.

Before

Before Corn was allowed to be exported, the Corn-grower, like the Wool-grower at present, was often deeply affected by the more or less plentiful State of the Article at Market. —If the Island, for Instance, had in any plentiful Year produced more than was necessary for its Consumption, the Husbandmen were obliged to sell their Corn for a mere Trifle, or keep it by them till perhaps it spoilt, in hopes of a scarce Year. As they could not however afford to hoard their Corn long on such Expectations, they soon grew indifferent about sowing it, and, after an extreme plentiful Year, turned many of their Fields into Grass; so that, by sowing less, in a few subsequent Years a great Scarcity was of course occasioned, and it was at last found necessary not only to pass an Act allowing its Exportation, but to grant a Bounty thereon.*—Thus
we

* This Bounty always takes Place with the Exportation when the Price of Corn does not exceed a certain Standard. The good Effect it has had, appears by a small Octavo Volume on the Corn Laws, &c. which shews, that we have lately grown much more Corn than formerly, and, by a just Calculation of the Quantities exported and imported, it is found the former exceeds so greatly the latter, that, after the Money paid in Bounties is deducted, there
still

we find the Farmer, by growing Corn, is always sure of a Market at a pretty even Price for his Produce; and can we doubt that those who now feed Sheep, will not plow up their Lands, instead of grazing them, if no Care is taken to relieve their Distress? There is no Doubt but that their Grounds will bear valuable Crops of Corn, &c. or they may turn their Thoughts to breeding other Animals than Sheep. Hard would it indeed be for the Farmer of any Soil, if he could find no other Mode of Cultivation than that of Sheep-grazing; since, in that Case, besides the Casualties of Seasons, Distempers, and other Misfortunes to which Husbandry is always liable, he would be dependant on the Manufacturer, and our landed Property, which is, and should be, the securest in the Kingdom, would then owe its Value to the accidental Prosperity of Commerce and Manufactures. — Though our Agriculture is much assisted by the Consumption our Manufactures occasion, yet it is not dependent on them. —

Still remains a considerable Ballance, of some Hundred Thousand Pounds Sterling *per Annum*, on the Average, of which the Kingdom at large has been a Gainer, since the Time of the Bounty being granted.

Whilst

Whilst some Countries, from the Sterility of their Soil, and others from a Want of Industry, are often indebted to their Neighbours for that most indispensable of all Necessaries, Bread, we can never fail to enrich ourselves by the Exportation of the superfluous Produce of our Soil.

The rich Pastures in *Lincolnshire* may be appropriated to any Mode of Cultivation whatever; I think none can prove more profitable than the Growth of Flax, which always thrives best on Land plowed up out of old Grass. A Gentleman travelling in *Flanders*, had an English Acre measured out of a Field of Flax; he had it cut, and the Produce kept apart from the rest; when prepared, and sent to Market, he found that it cleared £.32 Sterling: An amazing Produce for a single Acre of Land.* — Hemp is likewise a Plant that might be raised on such a Soil to great

* See a comparative View of Agriculture between *England* and *Flanders*; also the *Dublin Society's* Weekly Observations, where the best Soil for Flax is said to be deep clayey Lands, and Twenty Acres is valued at £.500, which is £.25 an Acre. The Superiority of the Flemish Crop is probably owing to their greater Skill in cultivating this Plant.

Advantage, and prodigious Crops might be obtained of Turnips, Cabbages and Carrots, for the Stall-feeding of Oxen. — Madder, which was once much cultivated in this Island, requires a similar Soil, and would undoubtedly pay its Cultivators well, especially during our War with the Dutch, who supplied us with that Article.—As to those Farms where Sheep are no more than of a secondary Consideration, kept for the Purpose of eating up the After-shoot of Stubbles, Clover, Saintfoin, &c. Hogs may be substituted instead of them; an Animal deserving much more Attention from the Farmer than it at present receives. The Hog is not only more prolific, but in every Respect more profitable, than the Sheep; it eats every Species of Food, and may be penn'd on the Land as well as the Sheep, and with as great Advantage. It has been found to thrive on Lucerne, Clover, Saintfoin, Carrots, &c.* and is not near so destructive to Fences, when accustomed to a gregarious Kind of Life.

* See Mr. Young's Experiments, in his Essay on the Management of Hogs.

It must be attributed to that enthusiastic Veneration in which ancient Customs are usually held by Farmers, that no Changes of Culture have as yet taken Place, to the Prejudice of our Manufactures, in the rich Lands of *Lincolnshire*. Necessity will, however, get the better of all these Predilections; and then the Manufacturers will find that they must hold out a much higher Price than ever they before offered, and give better Encouragement than would now content the Wool-growers, to induce them to return to their present Mode of Agriculture: But the Misfortune is, that this cannot be reassumed on a Sudden. It is much easier to plow up a Field of Grass, than to procure a good Tilth again; in heavy Soils it is not so soon effected as in those of a light Nature. The Farmers in the Vale of *Aylesbury* (a Soil similar to that in *Lincolnshire*) assure me, that a Field of their Grass, once plowed up, will be from Fifteen to Twenty Years before it will produce a like Crop. Add to this, the Breed of Sheep would be greatly lessened, if not impaired, by being driven off the rich Lands on to the poor ones. —Can any Person suppose, that if the *Lincolnshire* People turn desperate in their Wool

Trade, they would keep so many breeding Ewes next Spring as they now have? No, certainly. A third Part of them, if not more, in all Probability will go to Market, and the Year after a similar Diminution may take Place; so that when the Manufacturers, on the Return of a Peace, find their Trade flourishing, and want Wool, *fresh Pastures* will not only be to make, but *fresh Stock* to breed for them.

Thus is our Woollen Trade likely to be ruined, by the monopolizing Views of some of our Manufacturers. Our Artificers, who must be Partakers in the general Ruin, would emigrate to foreign Countries, where an Attention to Pasturage, procuring them Plenty of Wool, and Labour as well as Living being much cheaper on the Continent, some bold Speculator may be the Means of turning into another Channel, that Trade from which we now receive so many and such great Benefits,

From all the above Considerations, it appears highly necessary that some Encouragement should be given for the Purpose of
preserving

preserving our Growth of Wool, rather than for relieving our Wool-growers. The various Modes of Cultivation which I have mentioned, are all so well adapted to the *Lincolnshire* Soil, that it is far from improbable to suppose some of them would prove a sufficient Remedy, if the Relief of the Wool-growers occupied the whole Object under Consideration.—It should be remembered, that it is not the Interests of the Wool-growers, Manufacturers, or any particular Set of Men, which ought to be consulted; the general Prosperity of the State is the End which should be kept always in View, and that End can no Way be answered so effectually as by those Means which give Employment to the laborious Part of the Nation. — A Change of Agriculture would bring a heavier and more lasting Distress upon our Artificers, than any which can arise from a *temporary Exportation* of raw Wool,

Before I enter upon the Explanation of those Means by which I conceive the Exports of our Woollen Manufactures may be augmented, I beg Leave to consider what the Dean of *Gloucester* has already proposed, as Remedies for the low Price of coarse Wool.

The

The Dean of Gloucester's first Remedy is, that "Permission ought to be granted for the Exportation of raw Wool, under a certain Duty, suppose One Penny per Pound, which, with the Addition of Merchants Profits, Agency, Port Charges, Freights and Insurance, would amount to at least 25 per Cent. on the Price of the raw Material against the Foreigner, and in Favor of the British Manufacturer." The Money which would arise from this Duty, the Dean would have applied, by Government, as a Bounty to be paid on the Exportation of coarse Woollen Goods; so that our Manufacturers would not only buy their Materials 25 per Cent. cheaper than Foreigners who make their Goods of English Wool, but receive a Bounty on their Exports; which, with the Superiority of British Make and Finishing, I conceive would have just the same Effect as a Continuance of the present Non-exportation; for the Price of Wool must be low indeed, and the Growers of it in even a worse Situation than they are at present, when Foreigners can afford to buy that Commodity of us on such Conditions.

The

The second Remedy which the Dean has proposed is, to allow a Bounty of Three Halfpence per Yard on all Kinds of coarse Woollens and Worstedes exported up the *Baltic*. The Consumption of these Articles he designs chiefly for that Province in *Russia* called the *Ukraine*, where he says our Manufactures have not yet been introduced, and where he supposes they would be very acceptable to the Natives, who, from the Coldness of their Climate, stand in need of very warm Cloathing.—The Doctor also gives an Extract from the Tariff, or Book of Duties, paid on the Importation and Exportation of all Goods in *Russia*, by which it appears that the Duties on Woollen Goods imported there are very high, and which he attributes to a Resentment conceived by the Empress, on some of her Subjects being refused Naturalization, requested for the Purpose of their becoming Members of our *Russia* Company. The Doctor also adds, that the English Factors at *St. Petersburg*, by Means of the Charter of the *Russia* Company, have an exclusive Right of receiving through their Hands all the English Goods exported from hence to *Russia*, which he says is the Reason that very few of our Manufactures

tures have as yet been introduced into that Empire; he therefore proposes an Act to be passed for the Purpose of allowing our Manufacturers to send their Goods, either by Order or on Consignment, to the native Russians, or other Inhabitants of that Country, whether free or not free of the Russia Company.— Dr. *Tucker* is entirely mistaken in this Point, as, in Fact, the English Agents in *Russia* have no Monopoly which can affect the Manufacturers here, who actually at this Moment exercise the Liberty he would procure for them by Application to Parliament. Nothing can be more extravagant than to suppose the Charter of our Russia Company prevents any Native of that Empire from supplying himself with Woollen Goods directly from hence.— Our coarse Woollens have been introduced into *Russia* more generally than the Doctor imagines, so that, even in *Moscow*, there are several Russian Merchants who correspond with the Manufacturers at *Norwich*, *Leeds*, and other Places.* Thus it is plain that it is not for

* Amongst the Russian Merchants who deal in English Woollens at *Moscow*, is Mr. *Goussiatnikoff*, whose Probity and mercantile Abilities have so recommended him to the
Favor

for "Want of native Russians being permitted to buy the Goods at first Hand," that more is not used, or indeed from any other Circumstance than the Want of Money in that Country; the coarsest of our Woollens being not only dear, but fine too, compared with the shaggy Vests of undied black Wool with which the rustic Natives of either Sex are rather covered than cloathed, in the interior Parts of that wild and forlorn Country.—

As to the Cause of the high Duties, I think, if the Doctor had carefully read that Tariff which he quotes, he would have found in it a better Motive for them than the Resentment by which he supposes the Empress to have been actuated: He would have found, that, in the Appointment of these Duties, it has been the invariable Plan of that great and wise Princess to encourage her own Manufactures, by loading with Duties the Importation of

Favor of his Sovereign, as to procure him not only Ships and Sailors, but also a considerable Loan of Money, for carrying on a Traffic down the *Wolga* and *Don* to the *Euxine Sea*. This Gentleman, I apprehend, if the Russian Boors wanted only a Sight of our Woollens to induce them to buy more, is in a Situation better calculated to answer that End, than the Factories the Doctor would establish.

foreign ones; for which Reason we find a heavy Duty on all Goods imported into her Empire ready manufactured, and a light one on all raw Materials.—It is obvious, that the *Æra* cannot be remote, when the Empress of *Russia* will cease to have Occasion for any Manufactures but her own: She is at present at a great Expence in sending some of her Subjects to different Places abroad, for the Purpose of acquiring all the Arts and Sciences, and when she has in some Measure effected that Object, having an immense Territory, capable of producing in one Part or other of it, when cultivated, every Material her Artists can want, she will prohibit the Importation of all foreign Manufactures whatsoever; so that the Plan the Doctor has proposed, of establishing Factors in the interior Parts of *Russia* to vend coarse Woollens, if it were adopted, and should even prove successful, would stand a great Risque of being annihilated at one Stroke by the Imperial Mandate.

The third Proposal which the Dean has given us, and, in my Idea, the least calculated to answer the End intended, I shall explain in his own Words:—"The common and middling People of this Country being for the
 " most

“ most Part above the Use or Wear of our
 “ own coarse Woollens and Worsted, we
 “ must, if we expect any considerable Market
 “ for Home Consumption, which ought to be
 “ the largest, endeavour to raise up such a
 “ Generation of Men, Women, and Children,
 “ as shall be obliged, by their Situation in
 “ Life, to be clad in such Garments as are
 “ made out of coarse Wool, and to use such
 “ Kind of coarse Goods for their Bedding and
 “ Furniture. Now this, I apprehend, can no
 “ otherwise be accomplished, than by estab-
 “ lishing a Police for the Creation of Cottages
 “ on waste Spots of Land near Turnpike
 “ Roads.” — These Cottages the Doctor in-
 tends shall equal in Number, and be inha-
 bited by, the Militia-men required by Law to
 be raised in each County, each of whom is to
 take unto him a Wife, encrease, multiply, and
 so replenish the Commons and Wastes with a
 numerous Brood of Peasantry, who are to be
 employed in repairing the high Roads, Spin-
 ning and Weaving, and who are to bring
 again into Fashion the Use of Stuff Gowns,
 &c. &c. — Whilst the War lasts, I fear our
 Soldiers cannot be spared from their public
 Duty to undertake that more agreeable con-
 jugal one which the Doctor recommends;

and in the mean Time, what becomes of our Breed of Sheep? and our Wool-growers! what becomes of them? since the Progeny is as yet *unborn*, from which all the proposed Advantages are to be derived.

The Doctor, I hope, will excuse the free Manner in which I have treated his Plan; in Truth, I cannot look upon it in any other View than quite Utopian. Having, however, undertaken to give my Sentiments on his Proposals or Remedies, I esteem it my Duty to do so with Openness and Sincerity. I am sorry that, to preserve that Character, I must say, none of the three seem to me calculated to answer the End proposed.—In the first, he clogs the Exportation of Wool so heavily, that it would remain for ever unexported, if allowed only on such Conditions;—in the second, though I approve the Bounty he proposes, yet I cannot the Rest of his Plan, since he is greatly mistaken in the Matters of Fact on which he builds his Hypothesis;—and as to his third Proposal, though I wish to see our Wastes peopled and cultivated as much as he does, and though I think his Plan might be useful on the Return of a Peace, yet it must be

be confessed that it is no Ways calculated for the immediate Relief of our Wool-growers.

From what has been said concerning the Stagnation of our Manufactures, and the Encouragement necessary to be given to the Growers of coarse Wool, it appears very clear that no Remedy can be effectual which does not bring immediate Relief to the Sufferers. Those which I shall propose are not only such as appear to me likely to answer that End, but such as can create no Jealousy amongst our Manufacturers; for I shall make the Encouragement of their Trade the Means by which the Wool-growers are to be redressed in the Price of their raw Materials.—It is possible that what I shall propose with this Design, may be found liable to Objections and Difficulties which have never occurred to me; yet, such as they are, I will submit them to the Public,

Having remarked that our War with *Spain* has not only deprived us of the Consumption of the Inhabitants of that Country, but also blocked up our Trade to *Italy* and *Turkey*, the first Means I shall propose for encouraging our Woollen Exports is, That our Admiralty
either

either keep a naval Force at *Gibraltar* sufficient to command the Passage, or, if they cannot afford a Fleet adequate to that Duty, that they send two or three Convoys every Year, about the Spring Season, with the Trade to *Italy* and the *Levant*, which may also scour the *Mediterranean*, and succour *Gibraltar*. I have already observed that our Communication with the Countries up the *Mediterranean*, by Way of *Ostend*, or by neutral Vessels direct, is very chargeable and tedious; it is likewise very dangerous, for as Part of the Goods to *Italy*, and all of them to *Turkey*, are sent by the Merchants and Manufacturers here on their own Account and Risque, they can neither be properly warranted in the Bills of Loading, or Policies of Insurance, as neutral Property, and are therefore liable to be taken out of the neutral Vessels by our Enemies, whenever they may meet with them.—The Trade with *Turkey*, in the Article of Woollen Goods, is much more improveable than that with *Russia*; it may be called an unwrought Mine to our Manufacturers, very few of their Articles having as yet been introduced into that Empire. It is not yet Thirty Years ago that Shalloons were first sent from hence to *Turkey*; and for a few Years before the Trade

was

was lost (for in Fact it is little less at present) we shipp'd to the Amount of more than £.100,000 Value annually to that Market. It must be further observed, that this is not a Country whose Sovereign will be at the *Trouble* of forming Plans for encouraging his own Manufactures, in Preference to those of Foreigners.

Another Means of encreasing our Exports may perhaps be effected, by procuring the Prohibition of British Woollens to be taken off, which at present subsists both in *Sweden* and *Denmark*. The Subjects of each of these Kingdoms prefer our Woollens to their own, and frequently smuggle them, at a great Risque, from *Maelstrand* and *Elfsnoer*, which, being free Ports, are the only Places where they are allowed to be landed.—Manufactures of all Kinds, we know, have been but recently established in *Sweden*; it is no longer ago than in the 16th Century, that they first made Iron from their own Ore, which before that Period the *Hanse Towns* manufactured for them. Woollen Manufactures were not established in *Sweden* till more than a Century afterwards, so that it is but reasonable to suppose they cannot as yet have arrived at such Perfection

as to supply the whole Kingdom with Cloathing. The French probably make up the Deficiency; yet it is said that neither the French, or any other Nation, have carried on so extensive a Trade to *Sweden* as ourselves, within these late Years, and in which the Ballance has been greatly in Favour of that Country. Since the American War, we have imported very considerable Quantities of Pitch and Tar from thence, which we were before supply'd with from *America*; and the Sums we have lately paid to *Sweden*, as a neutral Power, for Carriage of all Kinds of Merchandize, have been prodigiously large, it being no uncommon Thing for the Captain of one of their Vessels to clear the Value of his Ship in a Couple of Trips.—From these Circumstances, I conceive it not impossible that a more favorable Reception might be procured our Woollens in *Sweden*, if it were properly negociated.

If neither of these can be adopted, there still remains another more certain Way of encouraging our Manufactures.—In those Countries where our Trade is still left open, I have observed that the Natives have Woollen Goods of their own, which, though much inferior to our's, and less esteemed by them, yet come
cheaper;

cheaper, and on that Account are worn by all those who cannot afford to buy British Cloathing; if therefore we can bring our Woollens more upon a Level in Price with those made in *Saxony*, and to appear less exorbitantly dear to the Pockets of the poor Russians, it is but reasonable to expect that they will be more worn, and our Trade in consequence increase to those Countries. I therefore propose that a Bounty, equal to the Rate of 10 *per Cent.* on their Value, be granted on all coarse Woollens exported, and to continue at least during the War with *Spain* and *Holland*.—This Bounty does not exceed that now subsisting on Corn, and will most likely be attended with as good Effects: It will relieve our Wool-growers, without prejudicing the manufacturing Towns; on the contrary, it will revive their declining Commerce, and give Bread to their starving Artificers: It will also prevent Government from sustaining a heavy Loss in the Duties on dying Drugs, which must inevitably happen, if Wool is exported undyed and unwrought.—In short, it appears to me that the Landowner, Farmer, Merchant, Manufacturer, Wool-comber, Dyer, and every other Trader or Artificer who has any Thing to do with Wool, are all more or less interested in the

Prosperity of our Manufactures, and will be, in like Proportions, benefitted by this Measure.

If it should be objected, that our Manufacturers would receive the whole Benefit of the Bounty by confederating in keeping up their Prices, or that they would enter at the Custom-Houses more Goods than they export, I answer, that all Bounties are liable to similar Objections; nevertheless, in this Case, such Abuses may be easily prevented. Let the Woollen-Dealer or Merchant abroad, who imports the Article, receive the Bounty from the English Consul there; let him be obliged to shew Proofs of his Entry at the Custom-House there, or produce and swear to the Bill of Loading and Invoice received from the Manufacturer or Exporter here: These concurring Testimonies will ascertain the Reality of the Transaction, as well as the Quantity or the Value of the Goods, in which the Consuls cannot well be deceived (supposing a Combination between both Importer and Exporter) as they are always Merchants themselves, and pretty well acquainted with the real Value of the Articles. Let the Consuls send proper Vouchers

Vouchers to *England*, draw for the Money, and pay it immediately to the Importers.

Another Objection may be made, on Account of the Irish Yarn which is imported here, and used up with our own in most Kinds of coarse Woollens. It would not be reasonable that this Country should be charged with Bounties on Goods made with Irish Yarn; I therefore propose that an exact Account be taken at our Custom-Houses of the Quantity of coarse Irish Yarn imported into the Kingdom, from which our Ministry will be able to judge what equitable Proportion the Irish ought to bear towards this Bounty, to whom it cannot prove otherwise than desirable, to increase the Export of their Yarn, at least so long as their Manufacturers cannot use the whole Quantity which is spun there: It must therefore be presumed that the Irish Parliament would contribute their Quota; but should they refuse, our Government may indemnify itself, by a Tax upon the Irish Yarn when imported.

When we reflect on the Advantages derived from our Woollen Trade, we must be sensible
how

how greatly it deserves the Care and fostering Hand of Government; and when it is considered that the Bounty I have proposed will not be a perpetual Rent-Charge on the Nation, that the Increase of Trade it will occasion will repay us with Usury, and that, if it is not at present assisted, it may be ruined for many Years to come, if not totally lost, by the Emigration of our Artificers, &c. what true Patriot would not vote for it? What Lover of his Country would not chearfully contribute to a Bounty which would so essentially promote its Welfare?

F I N I S.



